Progress under NRCP

3755. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :
PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether deadline for projects under the National River Conservation Plan are fast approaching but State Government agencies and local bodies have made little progress in implementing them;

(b) if so, whether some schemes, aimed at making waterways cleaner and limiting pollution levels in Chennai and 12 other cities, have not even taken off, though the Centre has committed funds;

(c) if so, what are the main reasons for delay; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV) : (a) Under the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) of Government, pollution abatement works have been approved in 156 towns along the polluted stretches of 30 rivers in 17 States. These projects have been approved at different times with different completion periods. The progress of work in most of the States is slow. The main reasons are delay in land acquisition and preparation of detailed project reports by the implementing agencies.

(b) and (c) In Tamil Nadu, pollution abatement works have been approved in 12 towns besides Chennai. The approved cost of these works is Rs. 1103 crore. Out of 13 towns, execution of core works of sewerage and sewage treatment plants in 7 towns namely Bhavani, Pallipalayam, Tirunelveli, Thanjavur, Myladuthurai, Karur-Inam Karur and Trichy-Srirangam has been delayed due to land acquisition problems, change in scope of work and re-tendering of works. In Chennai also, the execution of core works of 4 sewage treatment plants has not yet started due to delay in finalisation of technology options for sewage treatment and re-tendering.

(d) The implementation of NRCP is closely monitored by both the Government of India and State Government periodically at different levels. In

order to strengthen the monitoring mechanism further, the Government of Tamil Nadu has constituted an Environmental Management Agency as a single window agency to coordinate and monitor all the ongoing projects under NRCP.

Pollution in Ganga

3756. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that pollution of the River Ganga, particularly in its course along Patna, Varanasi and Allahabad has rendered its water too dangerous for use, even for ritualistic bath by human beings;

(b) whether the objectives envisaged in the Ganga Action Plan have remained unrealized despite large sums having been spent on the project;

(c) details of funds spent region-wise on the Ganga Action Plan so far and benefits resulted therefrom; and

(d) actions contemplated, if any, for prevention of water pollution in the Ganga especially in its course along Varanasi and Allahabad ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV) : (a) No, Sir. According to the water quality monitoring report of 2002, the water quality of Ganga, which is measured on monthly basis, is within the desired standards at Patna and Varanasi in terms of organic pollution. However at Allahabad, the average Biochemical Oxygen Demand level, which is an indicator of the organic pollution, was 3.8 miligram per litre during 2002 against the desired standard of 3 miligram per litre. The water quality of Ganga at Sangam Allahabad deteriorated in January and February, 2003 due to coloured discharge of partly treated and partly untreated industrial effluents of distilleries and agro-based industries upstream of Kanpur. After the intervention of the Central Pollution Control Board and the State Pollution Control Board, discharge of these effluents was stopped in early March, 2003.

(b) Under the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I, only 35 per cent pollution of Ganga has been tackled. The remaining pollution load has been taken up under Ganga Action Plan Phase-II which is under implementation. Wherever the sewage treatment plants set up under the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I have been commissioned, the water quality of the river has shown improvement.